

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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REPORT

SUBJECT Stalin Food Processing Plant at Kherson

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1. The Stalin Food Processing Plant (Konservnyy Zavod imeni Stalina) was a food processing and packaging plant located on the Dnepr River in Kherson, on Perekopskaya Ulitsa.
2. Until 1951, when he was arrested for embezzlement, the director of this plant was Maryanchik (fnu). His successor and the director of the plant in February 1952 was the former head of the Kherson City Communist Party Soviet, Pëtr Andreyevich Smolyanets. Other officials were Chief Engineer Trubichin (fnu); Chief of Personnel, Mrs. Alioriyets (fnu); Mironoy (fnu), chief of the plant's river fleet (five barges of 100-ton capacity, used to transport vegetables, and two small tugboats); Chernyy (fnu), chief of the plant's power plant; and Leyman (fnu), who directed the processing of sunflower-seed cakes.

3. [redacted] The dispensary staff consisted of Klaydiya Korotetskaya and her medical assistants, Aleksandr Ustimenko [redacted] Miss Viktorya Urublevskaya, 28 [redacted] Until the arrival of Urublevskaya, who joined the staff in 1951, there were only three medical assistants.

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4. The plant consisted of the following shops:
 - a. Cannery (Konservnyy Tsekh). Prepared products were mixed, cooked, and put into jars in this shop;
 - b. Cooper's Shop (Bondarnyy Tsekh). This shop manufactured crates and barrels for the packaging of vegetable squash (ikra), jams, and tomato paste;
 - c. Boiler Shop (Kotelnyy Tsekh). This shop supplied steam for machinery operation and heating purposes in wintertime;
 - d. Jar and Tin Shop (Zhestyano-Banochnyy Tsekh). Metal tops for glass containers were manufactured in this shop;
 - e. Autoclave Shop (Vikelnyy Tsekh). Here, the food-filled jars were subjected to the steam-heat process; this was done in large boilers, about 1½ m. diameter, which could accommodate about 400-600 x 500-g jars at a time. In this shop there were approximately 40 to 50 such autoclaves;
 - f. Vegetable Washing Shop (Moyechnyy Tsekh). Vegetables were washed and cleaned in this shop prior to their processing;
 - g. Khalva Shop (Khalvichnyy Tsekh). Mixing and pressing of khalva cakes (a pressed cake containing sunflower seeds, sugar, and oil) was done in this shop;
 - h. Tomato Paste Shop (Tomatnyy Tsekh). Cooking, evaporating, pressing, and distilling of tomatoes and tomato juice was done in this shop. The shop was equipped with several steam presses, boilers, and a distilling apparatus very similar to that of a whiskey-distilling machine.
5. There were about 600 people in all employed by the Stalin Factory; of this number, 200 were women. Workers' age groups (both male and female) were as follows: 18 to 30 years -- 30%; 30 to 55 years -- 60%; 50 to 60 years -- 10%. Work was carried on in three eight-hour shifts; Shift I was from 2400 hours to 0800 hours; Shift II, from 0800 to 1600; Shift III, from 1600 to 2400. During Shifts I and III, one medical assistant (feldsher) was on duty per shift; during Shift II, the physician and the other two medical assistants were on duty.
6. Before starting work, those employees who handled the food products, e.g., by cooking or cutting or sorting, were required to report to the dispensary for a check-up, where they were given a superficial examination by a medical assistant; their fingernails, hands, arms, and eyes were examined for skin infections. Regulations of the dispensary also stated that teeth, throat, and ears should also be examined, but this was never done. Each employee was asked whether he believed himself to be sick or well. All employees then took a hot shower (dressing again in their street clothes). Workers assigned to the packing of foods were given white smocks to wear over their clothes. Those workers employed in the washing or cutting of vegetables were required to wear blue smocks.
7. Personnel of the medical dispensary were expected to provide for proper sanitation in the plant, e.g., enforcing the physical cleanliness of workers and proper sanitary conditions at the work tables. In each shop there was a shift engineer, pishchevik, or expert in food processing, who, with the foremen, required the workers to keep the equipment clean.

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8. No disinfectants were used in the cleaning of tools and equipment; knives and other processing implements, however, were regularly washed in hot water and scrubbed with a powder for cleaning metal. 25X1

[redacted] The inside surfaces of the large food kettles were lined with tin. Each kettle or container was cleaned daily with hot water.

9. The meat product processed by the plant was prepared as follows: the meat to be used was cut into small chunks by women; it was then partially cooked in boiling vegetable oil. Next this meat was mixed with beans and put into a glass jar. An employee then placed a rubber band on the outside rim of the jar's mouth and a tinned-metal cap on top of the jar opening. A capping device fastened this cap so that it overlapped the rubber band, which served as a gasket seal. The jars were then subjected to steam under pressure for periods of up to 40 minutes; [redacted] not know what temperature was reached during this cooking. After this, the jars were allowed to cool, and during this cooling the cap and gasket sealed the jar by vacuum pressure. 25X1

10. The kinds of food packaged by the plant included green beans, peas, and kidney and soy beans; beans with beef or pork in a vegetable oil, sauce, and spices; a vegetable preparation (ikra) consisting of squash, fried onions, vegetable oil, and spices, but without caviar; and a similar preparation with eggplant instead of squash; tomato paste and tomato juice; green peppers, fried in vegetable oil and stuffed with carrots or onions; jams; unsweetened, stewed apricots, apples, plums, pears, and cherries; a firm, jelly-like, apple fruit loaf (pastila), and a pressed cake containing sunflower seeds, sugar, and oil (khalva).

11. Products were generally canned in glass containers. The vegetables and meat-vegetable preparations were canned in glass jars of 300, 500, and 1,000-gr. capacity, and sealed with a metal cap and rubber gasket. The sunflower-seed cake and apple loaf were packaged in small, paper-covered, wooden crates. The jams and mixed vegetable preparation were packed in 30 or 50-kg. barrels. Tomato paste was shipped in 80-kg. barrels. Fruits, fruit juices, and tomato juices were packed in 10-to 50-liter glass flasks.

12. All glass containers used by the plant and by the 8th of March Food Processing Plant (the other food-processing plant in Kherson) were manufactured at the Glass Factory (StekloTara) adjoining the Stalin Food Plant. The Glass Factory also made glass products for building needs (e.g. panes of glass, etc.) 25X1

[redacted] The wooden crates and barrels were made as needed in the barrel shop (Bondarnyy Tsekh) of the Stalin Food Processing Plant. 25X1

13. Products were sold to oblast or rayon trade offices (Torgotdel) and to the Soviet armed forces. No items were sold directly to small stores or to trade organizations lower than rayon stores.

14. [redacted] The packing load varied with the time of the year. Vegetables were processed during the summer and in the late fall at harvest season. [redacted] 1,000,000 glass jars of preserved vegetables of the 300, 500, and 1,000-gr. size were filled during the harvest season. Processing of the 500-gr. size jars exceeded that of the other two sizes. Sunflower-seed cakes, the mixed vegetable preparation, and probably other foods, were prepared during the winter to keep the employees on the job through the slack season. 25X1 25X1 25X1

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15. Food products were labelled as to content and net weight and were identified by the seal: Ministry of Food Industry, Stalin Canned Food Plant (Ministerstvo Pishchevoy Promyshlennosti, Konservnyy Zavod imeni Stalina). [] this label bore no date and no other identification. The plant regularly retained samples of each batch; these samples bore labels giving the date of manufacture and contents. Labels on food products occasionally included a picture of the fruit or vegetable contents. The labels were simple, primitive, and unappealing. 25X1
16. Inspections of the quality of the packaged foodstuffs were conducted at irregular intervals by representatives of the Ministry of Food Industry. [] not know who would be responsible if a contaminated product reached the market. [] only one incident of this type; a consumer found a nail in a food jar and made complaint, causing considerable excitement in the plant. The chief engineer and the plant doctor were considered to be partly responsible, and the plant director was regarded as blameworthy. [] not know what methods were instituted to guarantee permanent control over the quality of the final product. 25X1
17. Food canned in the plant was not subjected to veterinary inspection before processing. All meat, however, received by the plant bore a blue seal indicating that it had been inspected by a veterinarian. This meat arrived at the plant in a refrigerated condition. [] not know what agency was responsible for guaranteeing proper inspection of the meat and vegetables used by the Stalin Plant, nor who arranged the shipment of foods to the plant, or whether the meat came from a meat-combine or slaughterhouse. There was, however, a vegetable sovkhos in nearby Golaya Pristan. 25X1
18. Workers in the Stalin Plant were paid piecework wages. A qualified worker could make about 1,000 rubles a month; others made from 400 to 600 rubles.
19. [] In 1951 the retail prices for the plant's canned food products (packaged in 500-gr. containers) were approximately as follows: 25X1
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| Beans with meat | 5-6 rubles |
| Various vegetables | 1.6-2.5 rubles |
| Mixed vegetables (ikra) | 3-4 rubles |
| Stuffed green peppers | 2.5-3 rubles |
| Unsweetened, stewed fruit | 3-5 rubles |
| Apple loaf (pastila), per kg | 8-10 rubles |
| Sunflower-seed cakes, per kg | 18-20 rubles |

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